

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 INR-07 L-03 ACDA-07
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SAJ-01 DODE-00 H-01 NSC-05 IO-13 OMB-01 DHA-02 CU-02
EB-07 /091 W

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R 171720Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4156
INFO AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 21261

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, GE, GW
SUBJECT: WEST GERMAN VIEWS ON DEVELOPMENTS IN EAST
GERMANY

REFS: (A) BERLIN 7223; (B) BERLIN 7260

SUMMARY: A WEST GERMAN OFFICIAL AND A POLITICAL JOURNALIST BELIEVE THAT THE GDR REGIME, DESPITE THE CONFUSION ENGENDERED BY THE EXPULSION OF BIERMANN, DOES NOT FACE UNSURMOUNTABLE DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES. THEY HAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT THE REGIME IS MOVING TO ISOLATE THE OPPOSITION AND WILL BE SENSITIVE TO WORKER DEMANDS FOR
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INCREASES IN THE STANDARD OF LIVING, BUT HAS NOT YET FOUND A WAY TO WIN THE LOYALTY OF THE YOUTH. THEY CONFIRM THAT WISCHNEWSKI WILL HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INNER-GERMAN MATTERS AT THE CHANCELLERY AND THEY INDICATE THAT FRG POLICY TOWARD THE GDR WILL CONTINUE AS BEFORE DESPITE INTERNAL DEBATE ABOUT HOW TO PROCEED.

END SUMMARY.

1. A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF THE FRG MINISTRY FOR INNER-GERMAN AFFAIRS HAS GIVEN US THE FOLLOWING FRG ESTIMATES ON THE CURRENT SITUATION IN EAST GERMANY, AND ON FRG POLICY TOWARD THE GDR:

--THE KEY DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAST SIX MONTHS WAS THE EXPULSION OF BIERMANN. THE LATEST FRG INFORMATION INDICATES THAT BIERMANN WAS EXPELLED BECAUSE AT A PRENZLAU CONCERT IN SEPTEMBER (PARA 6, REF A) HE MADE REMARKS THAT THE REGIME REGARDED AS DANGEROUSLY SUBVERSIVE. BIERMANN REPORTEDLY TOLD THE CHURCH YOUTH THAT THEY SHOULD NOT FLEE BUT SHOULD REMAIN IN EAST GERMANY, ORGANIZE THEMSELVES, AND FORM A "RED CHURCH." FROM THAT MOMENT ON, THE REGIME KNEW IT HAD TO EXPEL HIM, AND HIS VISIT TO WEST GERMANY MERELY OFFERED A CONVENIENT OPPORTUNITY.

--THE SED WAS SHOCKED AND DEEPLY TROUBLED BY THE WIDE-SPREAD REACTION TO THE BIERMANN EXPULSION AND BY THE ALLIANCE THAT THE EXPULSION CREATED AMONG THE YOUTH AND THE DISSIDENT INTELLECTUALS. ITS SOLUTION HAS BEEN TO EXPEL SOME INTELLECTUALS OF WHOM IT BELIEVES THEY WILL NOT SUSTAIN THEIR REPUTATIONS IN THE WEST, TO ISOLATE THE MOST DANGEROUS, SPECIFICALLY HAVEMANN, AND TO HOPE THAT OTHERS WILL BE INTIMIDATED AND CONFUSED ONCE THE INTELLECTUAL CENTERS OF ATTRACTION HAVE BEEN DISSIPATED.

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--THE REGIME IS ALSO MOVING TO IMPROVE THE LOT AND AND THE MOOD OF THE WORKERS IN ORDER TO AVOID THE ALLIANCE OF INTELLECTUALS AND LABOR THAT DEVELOPED IN POLAND. THE LATEST FRG STUDIES ON THE EAST GERMAN ECONOMY AND ON THE NEW EAST GERMAN FIVE-YEAR PLAN (REF B) INDICATE THAT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION IN EAST GERMANY IS NOT AS BAD AS HAD BEEN WIDELY SUPPOSED SEVERAL MONTHS AGO. THOSE STUDIES ALSO INDICATE THAT THE REGIME WILL CONTINUE TO AIM FOR AN IMPROVED STANDARD OF LIVING AND, SPECIFICALLY, FOR SOME IMPROVEMENT IN THE WORKERS' LOT.

--NONETHELESS, THE REGIME IS STILL TROUBLED BY THE DISAFFECTION OF ITS YOUTH AND BY THE CONTINUING REQUESTS FOR EMIGRATION. AS FOR THE YOUTH, THE SED POLITBURO HAS BEEN INSTRUCTING PARTY OFFICIALS TO DEAL WITH THE YOUNG IN A LESS ARBITRARY AND LESS BUREAUCRATIC MANNER SO AS NOT TO EXASPERBATE ANTAGONISM.

EMIGRATION REMAINS A NASTY ISSUE. MANY YOUNG EAST
GERMAN TECHNICIANS AND TRAINED SPECIALISTS ARE ASKING
TO EMIGRATE TO THE WEST. THESE ARE THE PEOPLE FOR
WHOM THE GDR BELIEVES IT HAS DONE A GREAT DEAL. WHEN

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THEY REQUEST EMIGRATION THEY DO NOT STATE POLITICAL
REASONS BUT OFFER A WIDE-RANGE OF COMPLAINTS INCLUDING
HOUSING SHORTAGES, DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING CONSUMER
GOODS, JOB RESTRICTIONS, ETC.

--NONETHELESS, THE NEWSPAPER SUGGESTIONS IN THE
WEST THAT EMIGRATION REQUESTS ARE UP IN THE 100,000 TO
200,000 RANGE MUST BE REGARDED AS GREATLY EXAGGERATED.
FRG OFFICIALS CANNOT BE CERTAIN, BECAUSE MOST REQUESTS
ARE MADE TO LOCAL GDR OFFICES AND NOT TO THE FRG

REPRESENTATION IN EAST BERLIN. THE FRG BELIEVES, HOW-
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EVER, THAT THE REAL NUMBER OF REQUESTS FOR EMIGRATION
IS ONLY A FRACTION OF THE SPECULATED FIGURE.

--AS FOR STOPH'S REPLACEMENT OF SINDERMANN, WEST
GERMAN OFFICIALS STILL ARE NOT CERTAIN WHETHER THE CHANGE
WAS MADE AT SOVIET REQUEST (INSISTENCE) OR BY THE GDR
ON ITS OWN. THEY BELIEVE ITS PRINCIPAL PURPOSE WAS TO
INCREASE THE EFFECTIVE COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE
GOVERNMENT AND THE PARTY APPARATUS.

--THE DECISION BY A WEST GERMAN COURT TO FIND
WEINHOLD NOT GUILTY HAS OFFERED THE GDR A PROPAGANDA
PLATFORM IT INTENDS TO EXPLOIT. MANY EAST GERMANS,
WHETHER OR NOT THEY LIKE THE WALL, QUESTION WHETHER A
MAN SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO KILL TWO OTHERS AND WALK AWAY
FREE. THEREFORE, THE SED IS CONCENTRATING HEAVILY ON
THE WEINHOLD AFFAIR. ONE REASON WHY SCHMIDT SPOKE IN
RELATIVELY RESTRAINED TERMS ABOUT EAST GERMANY IN
YESTERDAY'S PROGRAM SPEECH WAS IN ORDER TO AVOID GIVING
THE EAST GERMAN REGIME FURTHER OPPORTUNITY TO ATTACK
THE FRG AS REVANCHIST AND UNRECONCILABLE.

--FRG POLICY TO THE GDR WILL REMAIN AS IT HAS
BEEN. THERE HAS BEEN A DEBATE WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT,
WITH SOME SPD MEMBERS FAVORING MORE ACTIVITY, INCLUDING
FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE GDR INFRASTRUCTURE WITHOUT
CORRESPONDING POLITICAL CONCESSIONS TO THE FRG. THIS
HAS BEEN OPPOSED AND BLOCKED, PARTLY FOR POLITICAL AND
PARTLY FOR FINANCIAL REASONS.

--AFTER INTERNAL DEBATE, IT HAS NOW ALSO BEEN
AGREED THAT SPD MEMBER WISCHNEWSKI WILL TAKE OVER
BROAD RESPONSIBILITY FOR INNER-GERMAN AND BERLIN AFFAIRS
IN HIS NEW POST AS STATE SECRETARY AT THE CHANCELLERY.
HOWEVER, RUHFUS, AS SANNE'S REPLACEMENT WILL ALSO
HANDLE SUCH MATTERS THOUGH UNDER WISCHNEWSKI'S BROAD
DIRECTION. THIS FORMULA IS ACCEPTABLE TO GENSCHER
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AS WELL AS TO THE MORE ACTIVE ELEMENTS IN THE SPD.

2. A POLITICAL JOURNALIST WHO CONCENTRATES ON INNER-
GERMAN RELATIONS GAVE ROUGHLY THE SAME ESTIMATE BUT
EXPANDED ON TWO PARTICULAR POINTS:

--HE SAID THAT ONE OF THE PROPOSALS THAT HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED BY SPD MEMBERS WAS FOR THE WEST GERMAN GOVERNMENT TO FINANCE AN AUTOBAHN IN EAST GERMANY BETWEEN MAGDEBURG AND LEIPZIG. THE PURPOSE OF THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN TO DEMONSTRATE WEST GERMAN WILLINGNESS TO HELP THE GDR WITHOUT ALWAYS INSISTING ON POLITICAL CONCESSIONS. ITS INTENT WOULD BE TO HELP STABILIZE THE GDR AND TO EASE ITS CONCERN ABOUT THE FRG'S WISH TO UNDERMINE THE SED REGIME.

--HE ALSO SAID THAT THE STRUGGLE BETWEEN GENSCHER AND THE SPD OVER WISCHNEWSKI'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CHANCELLERY HAD BEEN RATHER BITTER. HE OBSERVED THAT GENSCHER WISHED TO MAKE SURE THAT FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS, LIKE SANNE OR RUHFUS, WOULD REMAIN LOYAL TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY EVEN WHILE SERVING IN THE CHANCELLERY. REPORTEDLY, IT WAS SANNE'S READINESS TO IGNORE FOREIGN MINISTRY INTERESTS ON OCCASION-- RATHER THAN HIS MEDICAL PROBLEMS--THAT CAUSED HIM TO BE APPOINTED TO A RELATIVELY UNSUBSTANTIVE POST LIKE GENEVA RATHER THAN TO ONE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT EMBASSIES.
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